

SAINTE-BEUVÉ.

A GREAT CRITIC AT WORK.

SOUVENIRS DU DERNIER SECRÉTAIRE DE SAINTE-BEUVÉ. Par Jules Troubat. Paris: Calmann Lévy.

The history of Sainte-Beuve's secretariat is of a kind to tempt the lovers of strong examples. Let us bear in mind that Sainte-Beuve himself was of a retiring and almost shy disposition, and that he had a genuine horror of being "exploited." He was very angry once when a "smart" young writer invited his housekeeper, Madame Dutour, to dinner, with the intention of "pumping" her for the material wherewith to construct a plangent paper on the great critic's home life. M. Troubat in the present volume ingeniously confesses that if Sainte-Beuve had suspected any of his secretaries of taking notes of his private affairs for future publication, that secretary would have been promptly dismissed. Yet no less than three of Sainte-Beuve's secretaries have written books about him; and it really looks as if there had almost been a rivalry between them as to which should make the fullest exposures of everything which their former employer would have least desired publicity for. Of these three, M. Jules Levallois has been the most discreet, and M. Pons the most indiscreet. The latter wrote a book with the title "Sainte-Beuve et ses Inconnues," in which he professed to give the full history of his late master's love affairs. It was a brutal thing to do, and it was not manipulated with a delicate hand. M. Troubat, who certainly entertains a higher theory of the permissible—though he does not always live up to his own standard—is justly severe upon his predecessor on this head, and lashes him unmercifully, although the poor man is dead.

M. Troubat himself evidently belongs to that order of modern book-makers whose main effort is to make whatever material they possess go as far as possible. One might suppose that the ambition of a young man of letters, who had lived for eight years in relations of intellectual intimacy with Sainte-Beuve, would have been to write an adequate biography of him. But that is not the way of the school to which M. Troubat belongs. Their first consideration is how to make as much as possible out of their knowledge; and to solve that problem they spin out their recollections in diffuse newspaper essays, and then gather and print them in book form. This has been done with so many distinguished men that good and sufficient biographies of most of them are still to seek, and to find out the facts concerning them it is necessary to wade through many volumes, the principal characteristic of all of which is intolerable dilution. This is the third or fourth volume M. Troubat has written with Sainte-Beuve as a nominal text; and while he does tell his readers something about the alleged subject of his book, he has much more to say concerning himself and other—and equally insignificant—persons. In fact, one has to read some 200 pages before Sainte-Beuve is brought upon the scene, and this delay is assuredly not compensated by a detailed account of the antecedents of M. Jules Troubat himself.

Had the latter been the hero of any remarkable adventures the reader's impatience would be less; but he seems to have had an uncolored existence, the only break in which was caused by his imprisonment, after the Orsini affair, for having imprudently expressed a regret at the failure of the assassin's bomb to disintegrate Louis Napoleon. For that disloyal sentiment the young man was put in durance and kept there three months. His house was at Montpellier, where he was born, and he was intended for the medical profession, in which, not by brilliant practice, but by marrying some provincial heiress, his parents expected him to attain distinction. After his arrest and detention he seems to have cared no longer for medicine, and to have reached the conclusion that there was no future for him in Montpellier. So he went to Paris, and there fell in with that odd genius Champfleury, who was at the time engaged upon his "History of Caricature," and who took the lad into intimacy and gave him some useful training. It was while he was working with and for Champfleury that Dr. Veigne, himself a character, heard of the opening in Sainte-Beuve's study, and hastened to secure the refusal of it for Troubat. Just before this the latter had, in a restless and purposeless mood, gone to Italy. It was the period of the Franco-Austrian war, and the author describes with some force what little he saw of the campaign. Perhaps the most striking circumstance was the sudden change of Italian sentiment consequent upon the Peace of Villafranca, which was of course (and with good reason) looked upon as a betrayal of the Italian cause. At the opening of the campaign the stockholders had placed in their windows the portraits of Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi, supporting that of Louis Napoleon, which was given the place of honor. After Villafranca the picture of the French Emperor was removed, and that of Orsini was substituted. The police, of course compelled the withdrawal of Orsini's portrait, but the central space was then left blank. The incident was sufficiently significant.

It was shortly after his return from Italy, where he played the part of a correspondent, though not at the front, that M. Troubat became Sainte-Beuve's secretary. He found the place no sinecure, for the critic was an indefatigable worker. At this time he was under a five-year contract with "Le Constitutionnel" journal, and in order to live up to it loyally he had put himself upon a rigid regimen. For each article he received 300 francs, and if, as appears, he wrote but one a week, his income from that source was small. He had a private fortune which brought him in 4,000 francs a year, and the house he lived in was his own, having been left him by his mother. His scrupulousness as to his work was marked, and because of it he proceeded slowly. He built up his essays with immense care and research. The first step in preparing an article upon any man of letters was to study his works; and for this purpose it was the function of the secretary to read aloud, and to mark the passages indicated by Sainte-Beuve, who, while listening, would jot down brief notes to aid his memory. When all had been read that was necessary to the formation of a judgment, Sainte-Beuve would begin to dictate to his secretary, and sometimes he would write himself. After a rough framework had thus been prepared he would proceed to fill it in, and when at last the article was ready for fair copying, it was a ragged and chaotic mass of slips of paper, pinned together and looking, says M. Troubat, more like a dressmaker's pattern than anything else.

But this was not the end of the work. Before the article was copied finally for the printer, it was the duty of the secretary to sit down and read it carefully "en envers"—with hostile intent—to discover any awkwardness of composition, defects of style or lapses of any kind. These he forthwith marked in pencil. Then the master himself took it, went over it, accepted or rejected the proposed amendments, saw that names, dates and facts were verified—often dispatching Troubat to the nearest public library for the determination of such detail—and only then was it considered fit to go to the printers. When the proofs came there was another trial to be undergone, and a whole evening was usually consumed in the work of correction. Sainte-Beuve himself told Troubat that his temper kept getting worse all through the week, until on the night when the proofs of the forthcoming Monday article were to be corrected he became intolerable to himself and everybody else. This self-accusation, however, was a humorous exaggeration. Sainte-Beuve had, indeed, a quick and warm temper, but he did not bear malice, and when he had said something unjust about a man he was quite capable of regretting it. M. Troubat says that he had not done Balzac justice; and this was a considerable admission under all the circumstances, for Balzac certainly had not spared Sainte-Beuve when defending him.

The new edition of "Romola," now in the press of Eedes & Lauriat, will be in two volumes containing a number of illustrative photo-engravings printed in tint. The still more elaborate *de luxe* issue of this edition will be limited to 250 copies.

Stanhope's English publisher was walking on Bond Street not long ago, when he met a poor, lone shop-hands, who was also geologist, geographer and philologist, and whilst away the slow-footed hours with books. He also was a collector of the arrow-heads of ancient Britons and an explorer of British barrows, and he took Mr. Publisher (ignorant) to see the museum. It turned out that the shepherd (who, by the way, was one armed) had a hand, and he handed after a copy of Stanhope's book. "Well, I happen to know Mr. Stanley," said the publisher, slyly. "Then here's a pound for him, and tell him I'll send the balance for the book some day. It is my hard-earned savings, sir." The shepherd's money was returned to him, and it is said that he is to receive a copy of the book with its author's autograph within it.

M. Brunetiere is properly impatient concerning the modern craze for picking up and exploiting the unvalued MS. notes, scribblings, and other tracings thrown aside by famous authors as the worthless scraps they are. In France to-day, says Brunetiere, one man becomes almost famous by discovering in a lifetime a valuable autograph of Molé or another, more astute or more lucky, by publishing for unpriced publication what is in fact no such thing. Could the author of *Madame Bovary*, with all the characters written and read about—the most emotional letters, and wherein no single person behaves naturally from beginning to end, M. Jussrand has much playful badging for the romances in which everybody insists upon telling his or her story the moment they are introduced, and wherein the puzzled reader is left to wonder what is true and what is false. Charles Lever's ballads! But tiresome as these compositions are, they cannot be considered here without the novels of the "Sir Charles Grandison" type, and one can but wonder at the patience of our ancestors in poring over these monstrosities of dullness and insipidity.

M. Jussrand does not go beyond the time of Sir Walter Scott, or would his limitations justify a few pages he endeavors to trace the connection between the fiction of the sixteenth and that of the eighteenth century. In doing this he makes it very clear that Shakespeare himself was in the eighteenth century a man of genius, a full and complete writer, and that D'Artagnan and his comrades are the first to go to the printers. When the proofs came there was another trial to be undergone. Here is one of the illustrations to this effect:

"The fun of the thing is that half the discoveries are

frugal breakfast of tea, with milk, and two pieces of bread and butter. He is careful to add that the butter was fresh, and this kind of breakfast was either "English or Boulogne" and a "habit contracted in infancy." Sainte-Beuve had a cat, Mignonne, and he always reserved some milk for her. He esteemed her highly, and it appears that her intelligence had converted him from the Cartesian theory of animal automatism. He was in the habit of asserting that Mignonne could do everything but talk. It may be thought worth knowing that Sainte-Beuve took great care of his head, always avoiding those excitements which increase unduly the flow of blood in the brain. To this end he insisted upon having his feet warm, and in winter sat with a "chaufferette" under foot, both in his study and when he drove out. He took a simple but somewhat substantial dinner: "soup, roast, salad, vegetables, cheese, fruit or omelet." He was particularly fond of a certain kind of almond cake, to be had only at one shop. He liked strawberries also, and would sometimes eat them with sugar before going to bed. On awaking he drank a cup of chocolate, but ate nothing. He neither smoked nor drank coffee; his only indulgence after dinner was a mixture of cayenne with a little rum, the recipe for which had been given him by Edmund About, and which went by the name of "the About mixture."

M. Troubat has not gathered here many very impressive anecdotes, and one reason of this he frankly states. In the first place he could not reconcile it to his conscience to take notes of Sainte-Beuve's conversation when he was living with him. In the second place he was too tired when he was released at night to do any more writing. In the third place he never could remember at the end of the day the talk that had been had in it. The ingenuous secretary analyzes himself and comes to the conclusion that though he was not born to stand alone, though his nature is to some extent parasitical, yet he lacks the true Boswellian attributes. Boswell, he thinks, is at once detectable and admirable. With a character almost beneath contempt he wrote the best biography extant. One suspects that M. Troubat would have given much to possess the spiritual aptness of the Scotch laird, and that at bottom he regards his own incapacity for Boswellism as deplorable. But he has tact enough to make the most of what cannot be helped, and so gives his readers a neat little dissertation upon the inappropriateness of those literary methods which he can hope to acquire. If in the place of this quite unnecessary sermonette he had enlarged upon those traits of Sainte-Beuve which he had studied, the general public would have been more thankful to him. As the case stands his own personality fills rather too many of these pages; indeed one doubts at moments whether he has not come to regard himself as the central figure and Sainte-Beuve as the private secretary.

Perhaps the most sprightly piece of narration in the book is that relating to the visit of Princess Mathilde on the occasion of Sainte-Beuve's withdrawal from the "Monteur" because he could not accept Rouher's foreign policy. The Princess Mathilde was furious because Sainte-Beuve had transferred his services to "Le Temps." She went to the critic's house, and he, being ill and unequal to a stormy interview, directed M. Troubat to see her. The latter was fully persuaded that the visitor came on the part of M. Rouher, though she was careful—too careful—to deny this when no one asserted it. But she could not control her temper, and, instead of the outset took a turn toward Sainte-Beuve which hardly the most impudent creature of the Empire could have tolerated. She declared, in a tone of deep reproach, that she and her brother had nominated Sainte-Beuve to the Senate—her implication being that by so doing they had secured a permanent hen upon him. Had the Princess stopped here she might not have had a wretched wreck of a husband; but she went on to assert that "M. Sainte-Beuve was a vessel of the English" that word "vessel" precipitated an explosion. M. Troubat, much exasperated, replied: "There are no longer vessels; there are only citizens!" and the Princess began to raise her voice in remonstrance until Sainte-Beuve, hearing the noise, came in and stopped the discussion. When he heard of the "vessel" expression he was exceedingly angry, and said: "She shall see whether I am a vessel!" He then called upon his two retinues to reconcile them; for when he was dying the Princess Mathilde exhibited very kindly feelings toward him, and constantly sent for intelligence concerning his state.

Sainte-Beuve had no business in politics, and his connection with the Empire did him little good. As his conduct in the Senate was not of one occasion showed, we will not hazard any independent guess as to the place in which he was undoubtedly to follow the lead of the Government unquestioningly. He had one opportunity of defending himself, and that was when the word "vessel" was used. He had one opportunity of defending himself, and that was his study. There he was at home. There he found thoroughly congenial work. Thence issued those admirable critiques which will remain models of the art until criticism can no longer criticize. More than most men, Sainte-Beuve was represented by his wife. Of course he had a "vie intime," but it was much less significant and illuminative than his writings. M. Troubat has shown him brave, conscientious, cheerful, indefatigable, sensitive, and this is enough to know. We thank him at least for having refrained from the "realistic" exploitation so much in vogue at present, and so little creditable either to those who produce or those who take pleasure in it.

LITERARY NOTES.

Shelley's centenary, August 4, 1890, is to be celebrated by the publication of Mr. F. S. Ellis's "Lexical Concordance" to his poems. It is said that this will equal in bulk Mrs. Cowden Clarke's "Concordance" to Shakespeare. Oddly enough, this tribute to an expell'd Oxford student is to be printed at the University Press. Mr. Ellis has spent six years in the preparation of this work, which contains 125,000 references to Shelley's writings. Mr. Bernard Quaritch will publish the volume.

Sir Edwin Arnold will not leave Japan until September; though he may possibly visit Honolulu next month. It is said of him by one who knows that "the truth and earnestness of his study into Japanese institutions during his brief sojourn is really marvelous." His "Scribner" articles are looked for with keen interest.

In his forthcoming "Century" paper on "The Forgotten Millions" President Eliot, of Harvard, offers a protest against the arguments of those who hold "the extreme view that the existing social order is all wrong." "The great majority of people, even in the worst American towns and cities, live comfortably and hopefully," says President Eliot, and to prove his assertion he describes the social and industrial conditions existing in Mount Desert, which he says "affords a fair type of the organization of local American society . . . in which from thirty to forty millions of the American people live."

The new edition of "Romola," now in the press of Eedes & Lauriat, will be in two volumes containing a number of illustrative photo-engravings printed in tint. The still more elaborate *de luxe* issue of this edition will be limited to 250 copies.

Stanhope's English publisher was walking on Bond Street not long ago, when he met a poor, lone shop-hands, who was also geologist, geographer and philologist, and whilst away the slow-footed hours with books. He also was a collector of the arrow-heads of ancient Britons and an explorer of British barrows, and he took Mr. Publisher (ignorant) to see the museum. It turned out that the shepherd (who, by the way, was one armed) had a hand, and he handed after a copy of Stanhope's book. "Well, I happen to know Mr. Stanley," said the publisher, slyly. "Then here's a pound for him, and tell him I'll send the balance for the book some day. It is my hard-earned savings, sir." The shepherd's money was returned to him, and it is said that he is to receive a copy of the book with its author's autograph within it.

M. Brunetiere is properly impatient concerning the modern craze for picking up and exploiting the unvalued MS. notes, scribblings, and other tracings thrown aside by famous authors as the worthless scraps they are. In France to-day, says Brunetiere, one man becomes almost famous by discovering in a lifetime a valuable autograph of Molé or another, more astute or more lucky, by publishing for unpriced publication what is in fact no such thing. Could the author of *Madame Bovary*, with all the characters written and read about—the most emotional letters, and wherein no single person behaves naturally from beginning to end, M. Jussrand has much playful badging for the romances in which everybody insists upon telling his or her story the moment they are introduced, and wherein the puzzled reader is left to wonder what is true and what is false. Charles Lever's ballads! But tiresome as these compositions are, they cannot be considered here without the novels of the "Sir Charles Grandison" type, and one can but wonder at the patience of our ancestors in poring over these monstrosities of dullness and insipidity.

M. Jussrand does not go beyond the time of Sir Walter Scott, or would his limitations justify a few pages he endeavors to trace the connection between the fiction of the sixteenth and that of the eighteenth century. In doing this he makes it very clear that Shakespeare himself was in the eighteenth century a man of genius, a full and complete writer, and that D'Artagnan and his comrades are the first to go to the printers. When the proofs came there was another trial to be undergone. Here is one of the illustrations to this effect:

"The fun of the thing is that half the discoveries are

no discoveries at all. A "fortunate" Frenchman discovers unpublished verses of Boissuet, literary Paris spends days in discussing their authenticity, and, independently, it occurs to one to turn to a good old rhyme, whereupon they find the verses printed at large. M. Brunetiere grimly enumerates a number of the like accidents.

ELIZABETHAN FICTION.

A NEW EDITION OF JUSSERAND'S BOOK.

THE ENGLISH NOVEL IN THE TIME OF SHAKESPEARE. By J. J. Jussrand. Translated and enlarged by the French Elizabeth Lee. Revised and enlarged by G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The original edition of M. Jussrand's interesting book appeared some years ago. The author has taken the opportunity of its translation into English to revise and enlarge it considerably, while the publishers have so simply illustrated it—often from recondite sources—that its value and interest are greatly increased. It might naturally be doubted whether a Frenchman, however well equipped, could do justice to such a subject; but M. Jussrand has left few traces of his nationality in his work, while his appreciations are as liberal and sympathetic as though he had been to the manner born. Only in the early part of his book does he exhibit a tincture of patriotic pride, and this is manifested in a rather exaggerated instance upon the derivation of the English novel from Norman sources, which he, not altogether exactly, speaks as French in the modern sense. There may be differences of opinion as to the date of the beginning of the English novel. The romances of Middle Age chivalry, being almost all of alien origin, can hardly be cited as evidence even when domesticated or adapted. In France the "chante-fable," of which "Aeneas et Nicéphore" is perhaps the best-known example, may be said to have bridged over the space between the chivalrous romances and the prose tales of knightly and sorcery. In England no such transition state has received illustration. Chaucer wrote rhymed stories, but his example was not followed, notwithstanding the enduring popularity of his work.

M. Jussrand appears inclined to put Lyly's "Euphues" at the head of English novels; but Lyly cannot be said to have projected his book upon English lines at all. On the contrary, its chief characteristic was exotic, the language called Elizabethan being a bold adaptation of a Spanish fashionable folly of the time. It is difficult to understand the rapid spread of this imported affection. To day it seems intolerably tedious, chillingly artificial and lifeless. But before Elizabethan appears inclined to put Lyly's "Euphues" at the head of English novels; but Lyly cannot be said to have projected his book upon English lines at all. On the contrary, its chief characteristic was exotic, the language called Elizabethan being a bold adaptation of a Spanish fashionable folly of the time. It is difficult to understand the rapid spread of this imported affection. To day it seems intolerably tedious, chillingly artificial and lifeless. But before Elizabethan

comes to the best hour for dinners, a point upon which the most experienced differ.

Seven, half past 7 and 8 o'clock have each advantages and disadvantages.

A quarter before 8 is a sensible hour, as it is obviously intended to have dinner announced precisely at 8 so as to insure proper consideration to the cook, and at the same time giving the guests ten minutes' latitude.

It may be said just here that the growing fashion of arriving late is absolutely unpardonable, especially among young people.

No hostess should allow her assembled friends to wait for the others—the hour must be which was that it completely concealed the identity of the wearer.

Now nothing could be prettier than a good-looking girl in her bathing suit. We are not speaking of the very comely toilettes one sees displayed at some watering places, but the dark, neat, modest-looking

HOME AND SOCIETY.

INTERESTING NOTES FOR MEN AND WOMEN.

The art of dinner giving is not always thoroughly understood, and a few hints may be useful. It is wise to remember two or three fundamental principles. To begin with, the guests must not be too many—certainly not more than can be comfortably seated round the table with a little space between each chair. The number fourteen carries some danger with it, for if one guest, through illness or unforeseen circumstances, fails to appear, the party becomes thirteen, and many people are superstitions enough to object seriously to this number. For a large dinner, therefore, sixteen or eighteen seem to make the best party; though many hostesses, after much experience, prefer ten or twelve to a larger company.

Having settled upon the number, the next consideration must be as to the guests themselves. Now, it is a very common error to limit a dinner party to married couples, or to so-called "buds," making, as it were, a distinct class; it is a plan which never has made and will not make as thoroughly enjoyable a gathering as a more mixed assembly.

Let the old and young, the married and single, meet together; and if one dares to be unconventional enough to have one or two more men than women, it will generally be found a great advantage, as there is less danger of disappointment and more possibility of free circulation in the drawing-room after dinner. Of course, in this case the younger men or those most intimate with the family must go into the dining-room partnerless. The next important question to decide upon is the day for the party. The invitations should not be sent too long beforehand. It becomes a great bore to have a certain number of ladies hanging over for weeks in advance.

How exceedingly odd the bathing suit of a number of years ago would look nowadays! Then there was no attempt at any kind of prettiness. Old and young, fat and slim, all wore the same hideous rig—a sort of bather costume, with a large hat tied down securely over the ears—the only merit of which was that it completely concealed the identity of the wearer.

How exceedingly odd the bathing suit of a number of years ago would look nowadays! Then there was no attempt at any kind of prettiness. Old and young,

fat and slim, all wore the same hideous rig—a sort of bather costume, with a large hat tied down securely over the ears—the only merit of which was that it completely concealed the identity of the wearer.

How exceedingly odd the bathing suit of a number of years ago would look nowadays! Then there was no attempt at any kind of prettiness. Old and young,

fat and slim, all wore the same hideous rig—a sort of bather costume, with a large hat tied down securely over the ears—the only merit of which was that it completely concealed the identity of the wearer.

How exceedingly odd the bathing suit of a number of years ago would look nowadays! Then there was no attempt at any kind of prettiness. Old and young,